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ABSTRACT

Data from a survey of 1,300 four-year undergraduate colleges are analyzed to determine the status of religion studies. Characteristics of public, private, nonsectarian, and denominational institutions were examined to define the contexts in which religion departments exist. Evidence indicates that, although religion is increasingly part of the educational program serving educational goals rather than the interests of sectarian religion, it is still concentrated in denominational institutions and is seldom offered as a major course of study in a public institution. Findings show, despite expectations to the contrary, that regional subculture exerts little influence on the offering of religion and that institutional affiliation is the variable most highly correlated with offering religion. Other variables examined were selection criteria for admission, size of school, annual school income, library size, and school income allocation. It is concluded that the close association of religion as an academic discipline with religious groups is reinforced by the failure of public institutions to foster religion studies in a nonsectarian environment. Increased government funding of religion studies is suggested to alleviate this situation. (Author/DB)

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FINAL REPORT

Project No. 3-0536
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The Academic Study of Religion

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New York, New York

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ABSTRACT

This study analyzes data from a survey of 1300 four-year undergraduate colleges. It is found that religion as a discipline remains concentrated in denominational institutions with few public schools offering a major in the subject. Characteristics of of public, private, nonsectarian, and denominational institutions are examined to elucidate the contexts in which religion departments exist. Despite expectations to the contrary, regional subculture is found to exert little influence on the offering of religion. Institutional affiliation (or control of school) is the variable most highly correlated with offering religion, but other factors, such as admission selectivity, size of school, annual school income, library size, and school income allocation, are also examined. It is suggested that there may be a role for government in aiding the development of the academic discipline of religion.

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Religion "programs or departments are now established in the great majority of the 1400 four-year colleges and universities in the U.S. and Canada" (Welch, 1970: 2). There are departments of religion in secular colleges and universities, as well as in many high schools. "During a recent seven-year period in Pennsylvania, for example, the number of courses (in religion) increased from 700 to 12,000 according to the Public Education Religion Studies Center at Wright State University in Ohio. A study of an 80-mile radius around the California State University campus at Northridge found that 80 new courses had been added in a four-year period" (Briggs, 1976: 16E).

Justice Clark wrote in the 1963 school prayer decision that "Nothing we have said here indicates that ... study of the Bible or of religion (in a public school), when presented objectively as part of a secular program of education, may not be effected consistent with the First Amendment." Indeed, he went further: "It might be well said that one's education is not complete without a study of comparative religion... and its relationship to the advancement of civilization" (Abington School District versus Schempp, 374 U.S. 203, 225, 1963). Dr. J. Blaine Fister, an official of the National Council of Churches, has stated that "The study of religion today is becoming part of the educational program serving educational goals rather than the interest of sectarian religion. Good, well-rounded education demands it" (Associated Press, Nov. 1, 1971).

Religion has at times in its history been considered as unique among academic disciplines. Colleges in the United

States were often founded with specifically religious goals. (Cf. Hofstadter and Hardy, 1952: 3 ff.) Often the other disciplines were seen as serving religious goals. As one professor of religion at a liberal arts college put it, religion was seen as "the queen of disciplines" (from interview in author's files). Religion in recent years has been relegated to the place of a co-equal department in denominational schools at the same time that it has spread to public schools. Denominational schools that once required courses in religion for all students now present religion as only one option or elective among many others. Yet despite this fact and the fact that public schools may offer or even require religion courses legally when presented objectively (as noted above), religion as a discipline is often equated with religion as a sectarian practice. For example, in their Comparative Guide to American Colleges (5th Edition, 1972), Cass and Birnbaum's description of state schools constantly uses the phrase "_____ is a state school (or institution), makes no religious demands on students" (e.g., 427, 613). This notation is usually made under their heading "Religious Orientation," and the fact that a denominational school requires a course in religion is also usually listed under this same heading (e.g., 345, 609). It is by association equated with requiring chapel attendance which is mentioned under "Religious Orientation" as well. All other details concerning course requirements are listed under sections dealing with "academic" matters.

If requiring a course in religion (with no regard to the

orientation of that course) is perceived as "making a religious demand" on the student or as part of the school's "religious orientation," several interesting questions arise. First, one may ask if sectarian affiliation of a school influences the offering of religion as an academic discipline. Hofstadter and Hardy (1952) contend that the trend has been clearly away from such influence: After the Civil War, they contend, "The clergy (often) faded from their preponderance on boards of trustees to relatively insignificant numerical strength as they were replaced by bankers, merchants, industrialists, and railroad men. Although the new masters of higher education were not consciously anti-clerical or even secular, their bent toward the practical considerations of life caused them to foster those aspects of university work which, among other things, slowly eroded religious and sectarian influences in higher education" (33). From this statement (and other portions of Hofstadter and Hardy's work), one might well assume that there is today little sectarian influence on American higher education taken as a whole. Yet, in the case of one academic discipline - religion - we have have noted that there is some perception of sectarian influence. To put the question differently, is the academic study of religion really associated with sectarian religion (as Case and Birnbaum seem to imply), or have secularizing trends in higher education dissolved any such association? Interviews with professors of religion in Northern colleges (from the author's files) show clearly that they believe the latter to be the case.

As one such professor stated, "religion is just another department."

If religion is in fact "just another department," one may ask if it is distributed in the same manner as one would expect with other departments. That is, is it offered in schools with different affiliations (public, private, or denominational) in approximately the same frequency and degree? If religion as an academic disciple is actually free from denominational influence, then one would expect that it would be required in state and private schools as often as in denominational schools. In that circumstance one would expect at least that the control of the school would have little or no effect on whether the school offered (rather than required) religion courses. We may note again that there does not seem to be any legal bar to either offering or even requiring religion in public schools so long as it is "presented objectively as part of a secular program of education...." We have no a priori grounds for deciding this question. Authors, as we have noted, seem to suggest conflicting expectations.

Second, one might enlarge the question to ask, what are the factors that lead to the offering of religion? Does regional subculture, for example, have any influence? Reed (1972) has shown the existence of a Southern regional subculture that encourages an intense interest in matters religious. Reed states flatly, "However one attacks the problem, the evidence seems to indicate no substantial decrease in Southern religious peculiarity in the

recent past and no prospects for such a decrease in the near future. The available trend data bear this out. ... Nothing in these data (that he presents) gives much reason to expect imminent North-South convergence in religious and quasi-religious beliefs and behaviors"(81). Given this unique cultural influence, one might well expect that, if non-academic factors do affect the offering of religion, then Southern schools would be more likely to offer courses in religion than schools in other areas of the country. On the other hand, if religion is like other departments there is no reason to assume that regional culture will have any special impact on it.

There are other factors, academic and non-academic, that might conceivably influence the offering of religion. Perhaps for public and private schools religion is considered a "frill" subject. In a period of tight budgets, it is possible that only schools that have relatively high incomes could afford to offer religion. Rudavsky (1974) implies that Judaic studies outside of Jewish institutions is concentrated in the larger and more advanced schools. He mentions, for example, that there are endowed chairs of Jewish studies in some twenty institutions, "notably Brandeis, Columbia, Cornell, Harvard, Johns Hopkins, Iowa State, Ohio, Temple, Pennsylvania, New York University, Vanderbilt, Wayne, Wisconsin and Yale. In the main, ... the programs are supported ... by the regular institutional budgets"(10). The schools mentioned are among the better

financed institutions in the nation. If the income of a school can influence the offering of Judaic studies, it is possible that religion studies as a whole could be so influenced.

One might also note that among the institutions that Rudavsky lists are some of the most selective and prestigious in the nation. It is possible that religion is a novel and experimental subject for some schools. Perhaps the more prestigious schools are more willing to experiment. This is an hypothesis at least worth exploring.

On the other hand, some of the schools mentioned are very large institutions. It could well be that only a school that is large enough to have a diverse student body can offer a subject that may attract a relatively small percentage of the students. Alternately, one might argue that if the offering of religion is influenced by sectarian affiliation of the school, the smaller, denominational colleges would be more likely to offer religion. This would produce an inverse relationship between offering religion and size of school.

Another variable that could affect the offering of religion is the sexual make-up of the school's student body. Females have often been thought to be more religious than males in keeping with the popular conception of "feminine" characteristics. At the same time, most religious professionals have been males (until recently). If religion as a discipline

is associated with denominational practice, then one would predict that schools with largely male student bodies would be more likely to offer religion. If religion is independent of denominational practice, schools having more females might be more likely to offer religion assuming that (a) females are more interested in religion than males and that (b) an intellectual interest in religion is related to religiosity.

Since the offering of a course or courses is partly dependent on having the requisite resources, it is possible that a school's basic educational resources (such as library size might be related to offering religion. In this context, it might be noted that one could contend that the absolute amount of a school's income or resources is less important than the relative amount. For example, the school's income compared to the size of the school might well provide a more realistic indicator of a school's ability to pay for such items as religion professors and requisite physical resources.

Finally, in terms of policy, there are several questions that are suggested by the foregoing discussion. If religion as a field of study is perceived as unlike other areas of study, this fact is likely to affect the growth and well-being of the discipline. For example, if religion, the academic discipline, is seen by school administrators, students, and the general public as being closely associated with religion, the devotional activity, then several consequences seem likely:

It would be less likely to become a required subject in private, non-denominational schools and in public schools. As we have seen, requiring a course in religion may be perceived as "making a religious demand" on the student. It is not impossible that court rulings on church-and-state issues could be confused in the public mind in such a way that any treatment of religion, however objective, is perceived as vaguely illegitimate in publicly supported institutions. School administrators, wishing to avoid controversy and maintain the good will of parents and students might find it desirable to exercise extreme caution in the area of religion studies. Such caution might manifest itself by not including religion among required courses or even by not offering religion at all. If there is such a tendency, it would be a severe handicap to religion as a discipline. The introduction of students to an area of study is essential for the production of majors and, ultimately, professionals in the field. Required courses not only serve to reach a larger number of students, but they also produce a need for teachers for those courses. More students and more teachers, of course, produce larger departments. And a large department is likely to be successful in petitioning for the school's scarce resources more often than a small department. Non-existent departments, that is, where religion is not offered, produce neither jobs nor introductions to the field. Young

scholars might well prefer to identify themselves with areas that are free from any perception of uniqueness and controversy. Therefore, if religion is inhibited as a discipline due the perceived controversial nature of the subject, it could well fail to develop as it otherwise would.

If religion is inhibited by the misperception of court rulings and governmental policy, it would be a clear case of unintended consequences and, probably, of unanticipated consequences as well. In the latter instance, governmental action would be latently dysfunctional for the discipline of religion. (See Merton, 1936 and Merton, 1967: 105.) If this were to be the case and the dysfunction were made manifest, an obligation might well be felt by the government to aid in the removal of this inhibition on an academic discipline. The Supreme Court, as we have seen, had no intention of producing a chilling effect on any objective academic discipline.

SUMMARY

The foregoing discussion suggests three questions that our data may shed light upon:

First, is the perception of religion as an academic discipline being closely associated with sectarian religious groups accurate or inaccurate?

Second, what factors lead to the offering of religion? Do these factors help answer the first and third questions?

Third, what bearing, if any, do the answers to the first two questions have on public policy? Has governmental policy lead to unanticipated and unintended consequences that are dysfunctional for the discipline of religion? Or is the discipline of religion affected primarily by variables that are independent of public policy and more closely related to the structure of the American system of higher education?

PROCEDURES AND METHODOLOGICAL CONSIDERATIONS

We shall confine our attention to undergraduate departments of religion. This choice was made largely on practical grounds. We have available a file of data on undergraduate departments of religion that has not been analyzed with our concerns specifically in mind. (Portions of two published studies utilize some of these data in rather different contexts from the present one. See Welch, 1971: Chapter 9 and Welch 1972: Part II.)

There are logical advantages to using data from undergraduate departments. First, the undergraduate setting is central to the academic study of religion as might be inferred from the previous section. Many high school teachers, one may assume, would have received the bulk of their training on the undergraduate level. Certainly high school and college teachers would have been influenced by undergraduate training to some degree. Furthermore, most of the professional students of religion would be connected with institutions having undergraduate departments of religion. In a literal sense as well, undergraduate departments are central to the discipline being located between the secondary and graduate levels. They therefore connect with the other two principal levels at which academic religion exists. One cannot ignore the fact, nevertheless, that data gathered at a different level could produce different results.

These data were orginally compiled from a national survey of undergraduate colleges, including those that are part of universities, conducted under the direction of Claude Welch and Samuel Z. Klausner by the Center for Research on the Acts of Man, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. The survey was sponsored by the American Council of Learned Societies. Rather than a sample, the entire universe of all four-year accredited, undergraduate colleges in the United States and Canada was the population that the survey attempted to reach. The data were compiled from written sources on colleges and universities and from responses to two mailed questionnaires.

These data were "cleaned" (correcting errors) and somewhat reorganized at the Bureau of Applied Social Research, New York, New York by a team that included the present author. At the end of this process the data file contained four data sets as follows:

Data Set A This set contains three subfiles: (1) Schools having no official religion courses at all (N=278). (2) Schools having no coordinated program in religion (N=131). (3) Institutions having no department structure and, therefore, no department of religion (N=56).

Data Set B Schools with partial programs in religion (that is, not offering a major in religion alone) were placed in this set (N=180). It should be noted that some of these schools did offer a major in religion and another academic area such as

philosophy or history. They did not offer a major in religion alone and were therefore considered to have partial programs in religion.

Data Set C Schools offering majors in religion alone form this data set (N=411). (The second or final questionnaire was sent to these schools producing more data on each school than for the schools in the other sets.)

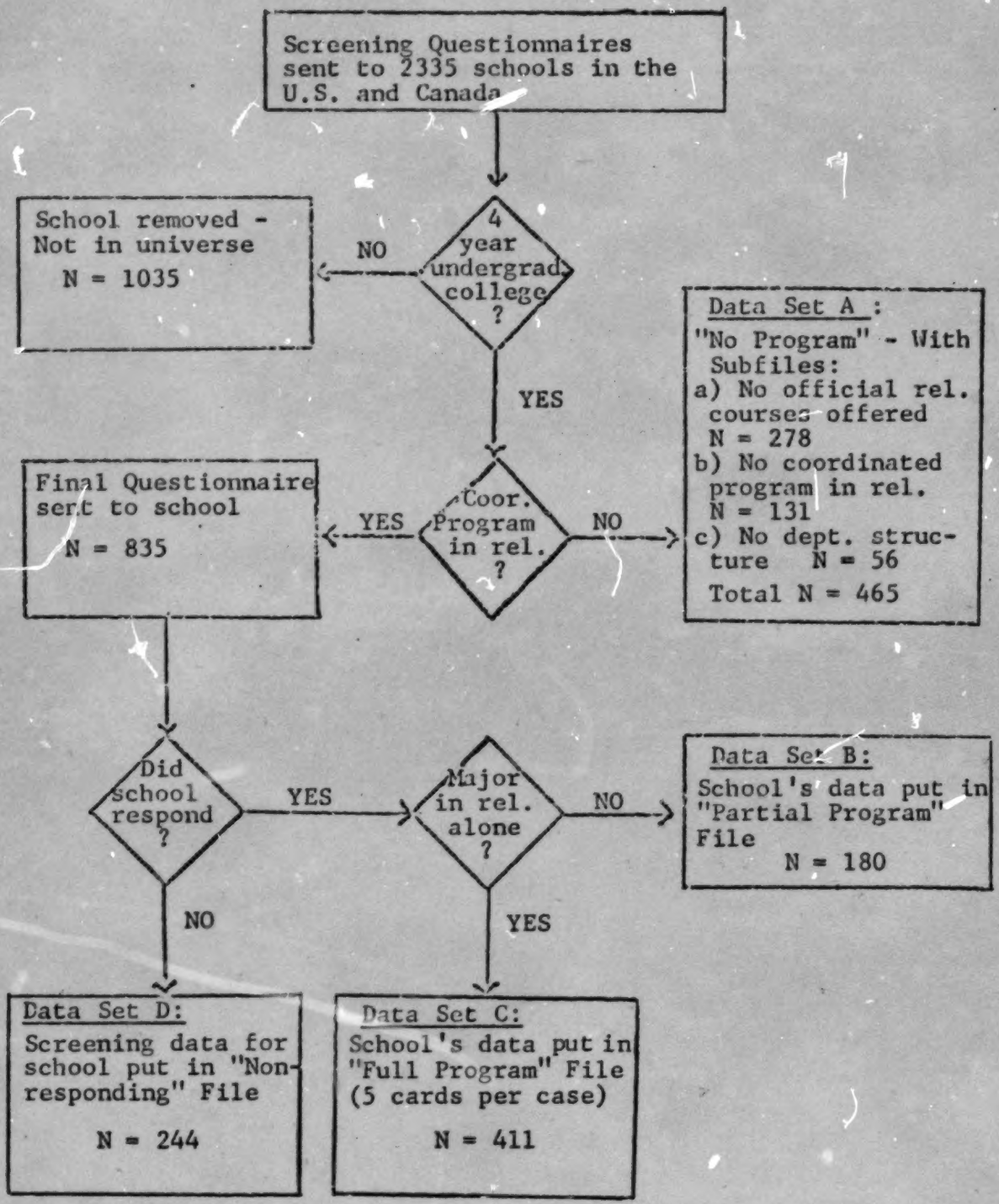
Data Set D Schools that did not respond to the second questionnaire were placed in this file (N=244).
(See Figure 1, p. 14.)

These four sets of data contain information on 1300 schools. This represents 55.7% of the 2335 schools orginally sent questionnaires. It is 100% of schools identified through the first questionnaire and other sources as being four-year undergraduate colleges or universities with such colleges. Junior or two-year colleges were excluded. Although schools were certainly missed, these data contain information on a very large portion of the institutions comprising the American system of higher education.

The present author also conducted a small number of qualitative interviews with religion department members in order to probe nuances of meaning that may be less than fully clear in the quanitative data and to provide a qualitative check on the validity of the indicators.

Unless otherwise noted the findings reported here are based on these two sources of data.

Figure 1: Flow Chart of the Generation of the Data


Screening Questionnaires sent to 2335 schools in the U.S. and Canada
4 year undergrad college ?
NO
School removed - Not in universe N = 1035
YES
Coor. Program in rel. ?
YES
Final Questionnaire sent to school N = 835
NO
Data Set A :
"No Program" - With Subfiles:
a) No official rel. courses offered N = 278
b) No coordinated program in rel. N = 131
c) No dept. structure N = 56
Total N = 465
Did school respond ?
YES
Major in rel. alone ?
NO
Data Set B:
School's data put in "Partial Program" File
N = 180
NO
YES
Data Set D:
Screening data for school put in "Non-responding" File
N = 244
Data Set C:
School's data put in "Full Program" File (5 cards per case)
N = 411

Several additional points may be mentioned here:

In addition to other measures of association, Pearson's r is used at certain points in this report despite the fact that the scales are usually ordinal rather than interval or ratio. Comparisons using these data of Pearson's r with nonparametric coefficients of correlation (Spearman's Rho and Kendall's Tau) have shown nearly identical levels of association for the same variable pairs. There is considerable support in the methodological literature for the use of Pearson's r (and related statistics) with ordinal level scales. (The classic treatment of scaling in social science is Stevens, 1946. On the issue of scales and measures of association that may be used with them, see Abelson and Tukey, 1970; Coombs, 1953; Labovitz, 1970 and 1972.) Of course, in dealing with nominal data, we use contingency measures designed for this level of measurement such as Cramer's V (which is based ultimately on Chi^2).

We have generally followed the practice of presenting probability (confidence) levels although the survey attempted to gather data on the universe of four-year colleges in the America rather than drawing a sample. It may be argued that with such a survey confidence levels are inappropriate. We do not take issue with this point of view. Nevertheless, we have presented probability levels for the benefit of those readers who may wish to know them despite the nature of the survey.

This report does not fully analyze the large amount of data included in the data sets outlined above. Further work is being done on these data by the present author and by others. (The interested reader may contact the author for further details.)

FINDINGS

Table 1 shows the distribution of the schools in the survey by control of the institution. It will be seen that most major religious denominations that support four-year colleges are represented. Public schools are more numerous than private, nonsectarian schools and more numerous than any single religious denomination's schools. Not only are public schools the most numerous classification of four-year colleges, but an inspection of Table 2 reveals that public schools tend to be larger than either private or religiously affiliated colleges. Clearly, public schools now educate the great majority of America's undergraduates. A survey conducted by Americans United for Separation of Church and State based on published sources found that over 70% of undergraduate, full-time students are enrolled in public institutions. (See Table 3.)

The American system of higher education remains diverse despite the preponderance of students in public colleges. In terms of number of institutions, there are more schools that are private or denominational (8[illegible], Table 1) than public (424). But a slight majority of institutions (50.6% disregarding the 26 non-classifiable schools) are not affiliated with any denomination (that is, private and public combined). The Americans-United survey found that 81.2% of <u>students</u> nationally attend non-religiously affiliated institutions. (See Table 3.)

Table 1 Control of Institutions

Type of Control	Frequency	Percent
Public	424	32.6
Private, nonsectarian	221	17.0
Roman Catholic	248	19.1
Jewish	7	.5
A.M.E.	4	.3
American Baptist	25	1.9
American Lutheran	11	.8
Assembly of God	7	.5
Church of the Brethren	6	.5
Church of Christ	7	.5
Church of God	4	.3
Disciples of Christ	13	1.0
Episcopal	7	.5
United Brethren	4	.3
Free Methodist	3	.2
Latter-Day Saints	3	.2
Lutheran Church in America	17	1.3
Lutheran Church, Mo. Synod	5	.4
Mennonite	6	.5
Methodist	75	5.8
Moravian	3	.2
Nazarene	5	.4
Nondenominational	10	.8
Presbyterian Church in U.S.	18	1.4
Reformed Church in America	3	.2
Seventh-Day Adventist	6	.5
Society of Friends	9	.7
Southern Baptist	35	2.7
United Church of Christ	17	1.3
United Presbyterian	42	3.2
Wesleyan (Methodist)	3	.2
Other	26	2.0
Non-classifiable	26	2.0
TOTAL	1300	100.0

Table 2 Undergraduate Enrollment and Control of School

	Control of School			
Enrollment	Public	Private	Denominational	
1250 or less	18% (74)	55.3% (120)	74% (456)	
1251 - 10,750	69.2% (285)	42.9% (93)	25.8% (159)	
10,751 or more	12.9% (53)	1.8% (4)	.2% (1)	
TOTAL	(412)	(217)	(616)	(1245)

(Total cases does not equal 1300 due to missing observations.)

$p<.01$ Cramer's V = .42 (based on the uncollapsed table having 9 values of enrollment)

Table 3 Undergraduate Enrollment and Control of School (Based on Americans-United Survey, 1975)

Control of School	Enrollment*
Public	70.1% (2,697,669)
Private	11.1% (426,578)
Denominational	18.8% (722,398)
Total	(3,846,645)

*National totals based on printed sources.

Derived from Menendez, 1975.

In summary, we may say that while public schools educate most American undergraduates, there remains a diversity of institutions available to students.

HOW THE INSTITUTIONS DIFFER

We have just shown that public schools tend to be larger than private and denominational schools. The denominational schools tend to be small, and most denominations sponsor fewer than a dozen institutions. The Catholic Church has the largest number of schools affiliated with it (248), and the Methodists are second with 75. With our data we can discern other differences among public, private, and denominational schools. Public schools tend to be better financed than either private or denominational schools. If we place control of school on a scale with public schools at one end, denominational schools at the other, and private schools in the middle giving them arbitary values of 1 to 3, we could say that we have a scale expressing ordinally "distance from state support" or "distance from religious affiliation." In either conception, state schools are one extreme, denominational schools the other, with private schools forming an intermediate case. (As private schools accept more governmental support, they tend to resemble public schools to a greater degree.) With such a scale (public schools were given a value of 1, private 2, and denominational 3), there may be demonstrated a tendency for school income to decrease as distance from state support increases.

With 9 values for income ranks, Kendall's tau c = -.40, gamma = -.51, and Somer's D = -.44. Table 4 shows the same relationship.

Using the same procecure of ranking school control, we find that there is a somewhat weaker tendency for distance from state support to be negatively associated with size of library (in ranks). Here, with 9 ranks for library size, tau c = -.27, gamma = -.36, and Somer's D = -.29. (See Table 5.)

There is a tendency of about the same strength for distance from state support to be <u>positively</u> associated with number (expressed as a ranked percentage) of students living on campus. (See Table 6.)

Despite trends observed by some authors toward the secularization in higher education and the separation of sectarian religion from academic inquiry (Cf. Hofstadter and Hardy, 1952; Parsons and Platt, 1973: 46 & 276ff.), denominational colleges are much more likely to require some form of religion-related activity or observance (for example, chapel attendance) of their students than other schools. In fact, over 90% of the denominational colleges in this survey make such a requirement while only 14.3% of private colleges do so. (Public schools are forbidden by law from requiring a sectarian religion-related activity.) The association, based on 4 ranks for degree of activity required, is tau c = .68, gamma = .92, and Somer's D = .77. (See Table 7, collapsed.)

"Selectivity" requires explanation. The measure

Table 4 Annual School Income (in thousands) and Control

	Control of School			
	Public	Private	Denominational	
School Income				
$1250 or less	7.3% (27)	22.3% (43)	30.5% (175)	
1251 - 10,750	59% (219)	59.6% (115)	65.2% (374)	
10,751 or more	33.7% (125)	18.1% (35)	4.4% (25)	
TOTAL	(371)	(193)	(574)	(1138)

(Missing observations = 162)

($p<.001$ for uncollapsed table with 9 values of income ranks, based on X^2.)

Table 5 Size of Library (in number of books) by Control

	Control of School			
	Public	Private	Denominational	
Library Books				
50,000 or fewer	17.4% (71)	38.5% (82)	38.3% (233)	
50,001 - 430,000	63.8% (261)	49.3% (105)	59.6% (363)	
430,001 or more	18.8% (77)	12.2% (26)	2.1% (13)	
TOTAL	(409)	(213)	(609)	(1231)

(Missing observations = 69)

($p<.001$ for uncollapsed table with 9 values of books in ranks, based on X^2.)

Table 6 Percent of Students Living on Campus by Control

Students Living on Campus	Control of School: Public	Private	Denominational	
1 - 20%	25.6% (79)	11.1% (18)	6% (28)	
21 - 40%	18.8% (58)	13% (21)	10% (47)	
41 - 60%	27.9% (86)	16% (26)	21.7% (102)	
61 - 80%	17.9% (55)	17.3% (28)	31.5% (148)	
81 - 100%	9.7% (30)	42.6% (69)	30.9% (145)	
TOTAL	(308)	(162)	(470)	(940)

(Missing ogbservations = 360)

Tau c = .276 $p<.001$ (based on x^2)

Gamma = .37

Somer's D = .30

Table 7 Requiring Religion-related Activity and Control

Religion-related Activity Required?	Control of School: Public	Private	Denominational	
Yes	0% (0)	14.3% (21)	91.9% (468)	
No	100% (291)	85.7% (126)	8.1% (41)	
TOTAL	(291)	(147)	(509)	(947)

(Missing observations = 353)

($p<.001$, based on X^2)

of this variable is "the selectivity index," developed by James Cass and Max Birnbaum. It is designed as an indicator of admissions selectivity by undergraduate colleges. Cass and Birnbaum (1972: xix) describe their scale as follows:

> The selectivity index categorizes the several hundred colleges for which objective data are available as "selective," "very selective," "very(+) selective," "highly selective," or "among the most selective in the country." These categories are general, but they are based on statistical and other factual information: the percentage of applicants accepted by the college, the average test scores of recent freshman classes, the ranking of recent freshmen in their high school classes, and other related data that measure the scholastic potential of the student body. This index is a crucial measure of the academic quality of a college because, as current research on higher education indicates, an institution of higher learning can never be much better than its student body - and is not likely to be much worse. (When a college does not have this kind of information about itself, or declines to make the information public, no judgment is made. This fact explains why a very few institutions of high quality are not given a selectivity ranking.)
>
> The selectivity of a college has often been measured, in recent years, solely by the percentage of applicants accepted. Used by itself, however, this figure may give a grossly distorted picture. The increasing sophistication of guidance counselors, and the growing willingness of colleges to give information about themselves, have greatly reduced the number of applications to selective colleges by unqualified students. Therefore, some highly selective institutions accept half of all applicants, while some far less selective institutions accept only one out of five students who apply. But the applicants to the more selective institutions have already been screened - they are a preselected group. Many less selective colleges, on the other hand, receive applications from a wide range of students and therefore may accept a smaller percentage. (Emphases in the original.)

With the exception of the "very(+) selective" category, which was collapsed into the "very selective" category, Cass

and Birnbaum's index was accepted as the measure of selectivity in this study. Schools not ranked by Cass and Birnbaum are, despite some ambiguities, classified as "nonselective."

While the Cass-and-Birnbaum index is probably the best measure of school selectivity, there are problems as its developers freely admit. In addition to the ambiguities mentioned in the preceding quotation, there are a few other problems with this index. First, many colleges in recent years have attempted to take other than academic qualifications into account in their admissions policies. This effort, which is usually undertaken to help rectify past injustices or to aid "disadvantaged" students, has at times had the effect of lowering freshman class averages of the traditional measures of academic achievement. This fact may not reduce the validity of this index for measuring institutional quality since Cass and Birnbaum have taken this factor into account, to some degree, in ranking schools (Cass and Birnbaum, 1970: xxi - xxii; Cass and Birnbaum, 1975: xxi - xxv). Second, most schools (713 of the 1300 in the survey) are not ranked by Cass and Birnbaum. Probably this fact reflects the reality that most schools are indeed nonselective. But many state schools are quite high in quality yet are mandated by law or policy to follow a nonselective admissions policy. These schools have traditionally had very high attrition rates - largely as a result of their admissions policies. In recent years, some

of these public institutions have attempted to reduce their attrition ("drop-out") rates while maintaining an "open admissions" policy. What effect this change in policy has had on quality is a hotly debated question. (See, for example, Jordan, 1975 and Heller, 1973, particularly chapters 9, 10, 11, 12, 17, 25, 26, and 29, for two different views. Cass and Birnbaum themselves take the position that "...an institution of higher learning can never be much better than its student body...." 1972: xix) We have no intention of entering this debate in this report. Our only concern here is the validity of the selectivity index for measuring the quality of the school. Third, the quality of a school might be better measured by the quality of its graduates than by the selectivity of its admissions. Unfortunately, we have no direct measure for quality of graduates in these data. The two variables are likely to be associated, however.

The selectivity index then may be considered a valid indicator of a school's selectivity and an <u>indirect</u>, <u>moderately ambiguous</u> indicator of a school's overall quality. If one exercises caution in treating this index as an indicator of quality and if one is interested mainly in relative differences among classifications of schools, as we are, then the selectivity index has some utility for indicating quality. And there are similar problems with other measures of school quality (such as size of library) that are available to us.

With the preseding discussion in mind, we may ask how control of school relates to selectivity. Using the same device of ranking control of school (public = 1, private = 2, denominational = 3) as previously, we get an interesting result: Ordinal measures of association show no association between the variables (tau c = .0786, Somer's D = .085, Gamma = .141), while contingency measures show a weak association (Cramer's V = .281, CC = .369). Table 8 reveals the reason for this outcome: In the case of selectivity, private schools do not represent an intermediate class between public and denominational schools. There is a slight tendency for private schools to be more selective than either public or denominational schools. Only in the case of private schools are more than half of the institutions in one of the categories labeled "selective" by Cass and Birnbaum (that is, in either the selective, very selective, highly selective, or most selective category.) 13.8 percent of the private schools are ranked "among the most selective in the country," while only about a half of one percent of either the public or the denominational schools fall into this category. (See Table 8 and Table 9. Table 9 represents a collapsing of the categories shown in Table 8 into two- selective (any level) and nonselective or unranked.)

Private schools are somewhat more likely to be selective since they are more likely to place "academic"

Table 8 Selectivity Index and Control of School

	Control of School			
	Public	Private	Denominational	
Selectivity				
Not ranked (Non-selective)	69.3% (287)	44.3% (90)	55.9% (336)	
Selective	21.0% (87)	13.3% (27)	24.6% (148)	
Very Selective	8.5% (35)	15.3% (31)	15.1% (91)	
Highly Selective	.7% (3)	13.3% (27)	3.7% (22)	
Most Selective	.5% (2)	13.8% (28)	.7% (4)	
TOTAL	100.0% (414)	100.0% (203)	100.0% (601)	(1218)

(Missing observations = 82)

($p<.001$, based on X^2)

Table 9 Selectivity (collapsed) and Control of School

	Control of School			
	Public	Private	Denominational	
Selectivity				
Not ranked (Non-selective)	69.3% (287)	44.3% (90)	55.9% (336)	
Selective*	30.7% (127)	55.7% (113)	44.1% (265)	
TOTAL	(414)	(203)	(601)	(1218)

*Combines the ranks, selective, very selective, highly selective, and most selective. See Table 8.

(Missing observations = 82)

($p<.001$, based on X^2; V = .178)

goals high on their list of priorities. They are able to do this since they do not usually serve a fixed constituency, such as the citizens of a state or the members of a religious group. This is not to say that they are not dependent on the support of certain groups (such as alumni or the community in which the school is located). It is rather that these schools are somewhat freer to accept or reject students based on academic considerations. It is not uncommon for a denominational institution to give preference to members of the supporting religious group, or for a state school to be required to accept all graduates (or the great majority of graduates) of state accredited high schools. (For examples, see Fine, 1972; Cass and Birnbaum, 1975; Hawes and Novelis, 1972: passim.) Therefore, it is understandable that private schools are the most selective of the three types of school (classified by control of the school) while denominational colleges are next in selectivity and public schools are the least selective. (See Table 8 and 9.)

It should be pointed out that some public schools rank highly on selectivity and that the majority of denominational schools rank as selective or better. Furthermore, as we have already shown, public schools tend to have higher incomes and to have larger libraries (and probably more of other educational facilities) than either of the nonpublicly controlled categories of institutions of higher education.

Public schools may be very high in selectivity and, even more often perhaps, very high in quality. Nevertheless, it is difficult to ignore the fact that many of the most prestigious schools in the nation are classified as private (the entire Ivy League, for example). In our study, 82% of the institutions ranked by Cass and Birnbaum as "among the most selective in the country" are private. It is apparent that schools with a singular, well-defined constituency are rarely able to be as selective as institutions whose constituencies are, at least to some extent, countervailing. How the increasing governmental role in private higher education is likely to affect this circumstance is not yet clear although it is possible that some "private" schools may eventually have to be labeled quasi-public.

SUMMARY AND DISCUSSION: HOW THE INSTITUTIONS DIFFER

As we saw in the previous sections, public schools educate most American undergraduates. These institutions also tend to be better financed, and if library size may be taken as a synecdochical indicator of institutional facilities, then public schools have better facilities than the nonpublic institutions. If it is a question of resources, one might expect that public schools would be able to offer courses in religion. Nonpublic institutions tend to be more selective than public schools, however.

This finding is not the strongest association in the data, and it may not be interpreted as meaning that nonpublic schools are higher in quality without caution. The most selective schools in the country <u>are</u> overwhelming in the private group. On most other variables, private schools tend to be an intermediate case between public and denominational schools. Private and denominational schools are more residential (more students living on campus) than public schools. Denominational schools are more poorly financed, seem to have poorer facilities, and are much more likely to compel religious observance than either of the other two types of schools. (Public schools, of course, cannot legally require religious observance.) They are not quite as selective as private schools. There are, however, a large number of denominational schools, which tend to be small in size, controlled by a great variety of religious groups. They certainly contribute to the diversity of American higher education, and diversity may be seen as a desirable goal (Lyman, 1975). If our interpretation of the finding on selectivity is correct, it may be that denominational and public schools are more directly responsive to more clearly defined constituencies than are private schools. This latter circumstance may be seen in a positive or negative evaluational light, but it is likely to affect the operation of these institutions - including course offerings, requirements, and admissions policies.

From the foregoing discussion, an image of each of these categories of American institutions of higher education classified by the control of the school emerges with greater or lesser clarity. Public schools are more often large, well financed, well supplied institutions than the other two types. Public school students, based on selectivity, are more heterogeneous academically and, inferentially, more heterogeneous religiously. The importance of public institutions for American higher education would be hard to overestimate. "Dominant" may not be too strong an adjective to describe the position of public schools in the system.

Private schools are smaller than public schools and educate many fewer students. Some of the most elite schools in the nation are in this group, however. These schools are extremely prestigious. Many private schools cannot be considered very similar to these elite institutions, on the other hand. Denominational schools sometimes exceed them. Private schools must be seen as an extremely heterogeneous group of institutions which may be in a period of transition.

Denominational colleges, while more often selective than public schools, are less often selective than private schools. They are relatively small institutions in general - 74% having fewer than 1251 students. But they educate more students in the aggregate than do private, nonsectarian schools. Many are poorly financed although this is partly

explained by the smallness of the schools. The vast majority of denominational schools make religious demands on their students, often in the form of requiring attendance at chapel. While the adjective "parochial" in all of its meanings may come to mind to describe denominational schools as reflected in these data, one must remember that almost 20 percent (117) of these institutions are ranked either very, highly, or most selective. Twenty-five of them have school incomes of over 10.7 million dollars annually, and thirteen have libraries with more than 430,001 volumes. Denominational colleges continue to play a vital role in the educating of American undergraduates.

FACTORS INFLUENCING THE OFFERING OF RELIGION

Both popular conceptions and professional literature suggest the existence of a Southern regional subculture that encourages an intense interest in religion (Reed, 1972). If there is a "Bible belt," it does not seem illogical to suppose that the intense cultural interest in religion would encourage the pursuit of the academic study of religion. Indeed, we had assumed that schools in some regions, particularly the South and Mid-West, would be more likely to offer religion due to cultural influences. The data indicate, however, that no such simple relationship between region and offering religion exists. Table 10 shows that there is no significant relation-

ship between region (South versus non-South) and offering religion in the aggregate. The Cramer's V for this table is .058. Additionally, virtually no difference is found in the association as measured by Pearson's r between control of school (dichotomized as religiously affiliated or not for use with Pearson's r) and offering religion (an ordinal variable having the values, full program in religion = 3, partial program = 2, no program = 1) when South and non-South are taken separately. In the South, the correlation between these two variables is r = .626 ($p \leq .001$, n = 312) which is very slightly higher than the correlation in the non-South regions, r = .5996 ($p \leq .001$, n = 1033). If there existed some Southern cultural factor that encourages an academic interest in religion, one would expect that more schools of all affiliations (or control) would offer religion in the South than outside the area, thereby weakening the association between school control and offering religion as measured by r. In fact, the association is almost identical to the one found in the non-Southern areas.

Table 11 shows that public colleges in the South are not significantly more likely to offer religion than public schools outside the South. Indeed, only about 10 percent of public schools nationally offer a full program in religion.

It might be argued that since the South supports proportionately many more denominational colleges than the rest

Table 10 Offering Religion: Southern and Non-Southern Schools (Public, Private, and Denominational Schools Aggregated - Percentages).

Offering religion	Region: Non-South*	South*	
No program in religion	28.4 (201)	24.0 (76)	(277)
Partial program	35.2 (249)	34.1 (108)	(357)
Full program	36.4 (258)	42.0 (133)	(391)
	100% (708)	100.1% (317)	(1025)

X^2=3.4014 with 2dF

p>.1

V=.0576

(Missing observations = 275)

*South = WV, MD, DE, VA, NC, SC, GA, FL, DC, KY, TN, AL, MS, TX, LA, OK, AR. Non-South = All other areas in survey excluding Canada and U.S. possessions.

(Percentages do not always total 100% due to rounding.)

Table 11 Offering Religion in Public Schools: South versus Non-South (Percentages).

Offering religion	Region: Non-South	Region: South	
No program in religion	48.1 (115)	46.1 (65)	(180)
Partial program	44.4 (106)	43.3 (61)	(167)
Full program	7.5 (18)	10.6 (15)	(33)
	100% (239)	100% (141)	(380)

X^2=1.0859 with 2dF

$p > .5$

V=.0535

of the country, it need not be concerned with fostering religion studies in public schools. Table 12 does in fact indicate that there is a difference in the composition of the institutions of higher education between the South and the rest of the nation. Analysis reveals, however, that this difference is almost wholly a matter of regional differences in proportions of public and private schools rather than in denominational schools. The South has only 5.18 percent more denominational colleges than would be expected given a fully proportionate distribution. (The formula used for computing expected frequency assuming a proportionate distribution is $f_e^i = \frac{c_i\ r_i}{N}$, where f_e^i = expected frequency for cell i, c_i = the marginal observed frequency for the column of cell i, r_i = the marginal for the row of cell i, N = the total number of valid cases in the table. Percent difference (%D) was computed by the formula, $\%D = \frac{(f_o^i - f_e^i)}{f_e^i} \times 100$ if $f_o^i > f_e^i$. If $f_o^i < f_e^i$, the formula is $\%D = \frac{(f_e^i - f_o^i)}{f_e^i} \times 100$. f_o^i = the observed frequency for cell i. These formulae assume that the data is first arranged in tabular form.)

The regions outside the South have almost exactly their proportional share of denominational colleges - 297 observed compared with 304 expected given proportionality. On the other hand, the South has 52.7 percent fewer than its expected share of private, nonsectarian colleges, but 19.5 percent

Table 12 Institutional Control by Region (Percentages).

Control of School	Region		
	Non-South	South	
Public	34.5 (239)	45.2 (141)	(380)
Private	22.70 (157)	8.7 (27)	(184)
Religiously affiliated	42.90 (297)	46.2 (144)	(441)
	100.1 (693)	100.1 (312)	(1005)

X^2=30.0853 with 2dF

p< .001

V=.1730

(Missing observations = 295)

(Percentages do not total 100% due to rounding.)

more public schools than proportionately expected. In the non-South, almost the reverse obtains: 9.14 percent fewer public colleges than expected, but 23.7 percent more private colleges than would be expected given proportionate distribution. Therefore, it seems that nondenominationally affiliated higher education in the South is predominately public while in the non-South it is more evenly divided between public and private, nonsectarian institutions. That this conclusion largely explains the relationship ($V = .1730$, $p<.001$) shown in Table 12 is demonstrated in Table 13. Here the private and public categories are combined while the religiously-affiliated (denominational) category is retained. Now there is no relationship between region and control of school ($\phi^2 = V = .0009$). The South is not more likely than the rest of the country to have denominational schools.

It may be that the impression of a "Bible belt" with regard to higher education is somewhat illusory. Bob Jones University (in South Carolina) is often cited as an example of Southern fundamentalism. Yet, it apparently draws more students from the non-South than from the South. (See Bestic, 1971: 77; also the Bob Jones University Bulletin, 1967: 25.) Perhaps Southern religious devotion simply expresses itself in other ways. Our data are insufficient to settle all these attendant issues. However, some additional evidence is suggestive: The South's relatively few private schools are more

Table 13 · Institutional Control by Region (Combining Non-Denominational Schools - Percentages).

Control of School	Region: Non-South	Region: South	
Non-religious	57.1 (396)	53.8 (168)	(564)
Religiously affiliated	42.9 (297)	46.2 (144)	(441)
	100 (693)	100 (312)	(1005)

X^2=.9489 with 1dF

$p > .30$

ϕ^2=.0009 (= V in the 2X2 table)

likely to offer religion than private schools in the rest of the nation (Table 14). It is likely, although we cannot demonstrate it, that these "private, nonsectarian" Southern schools are either closely associated with religious groups or were actually denominational schools until relatively recently. If so, they may be much more similar to denominational schools than are their counterparts outside the South which either became nonsectarian in the more distant past or were never affiliated with any religious group.

In the preceding discussion, the alert reader may have noted that while regional subculture does not seem to be a major factor in leading to the offering of religion, another factor is highly correlated with offering religion: control of school. Taking undergraduate colleges in the aggregate, denominational affiliation (or not - dichotomized for use with r) of an institution is the variable most closely associated with offering courses in religion. Referring to the correlation (r) matrix, Table 15, it may be seen that the correlation of control (affiliation), variable X4 offering religion, X10, is almost .60 ($p \leq .001$). This variable alone explains nearly 36% of the variation of the dependent variable, offering religion ($r^2 = .3595$).

Variable X5, degree of religious affiliation, is virtually identical to X4. It attempts to measure closeness of association of the school with a denomination. For

Table 14 Offering Religion in Private, Non-Sectarian Schools: South versus Non-South (Percentages).

Offering religion	Region: Non-South	South	
No program in religion	48.4 (76)	22.2 (6)	(82)
Partial program	26.1 (41)	37 (10)	(51)
Full program	25.5 (40)	40.7 (11)	(51)
	100 (157)	99.9 (27)	(184)

X^2=6.4725 with 2dF

$p < .05$

V=.188

(Percentages do not total 100% due to rounding.)

Table 15 Correlations of Offering Religion with Other Variables for All Schools in Survey (N=1300)
(Simple r)

	X_1	X_2	X_3	X_4	X_5	X_6	X_7	X_8	X_9	X_{10}	X_{11}	X_{12}	X_{13}
X_{10} (Offering Religion)	.2496	-.0715	.1519	.5996	.59	.5610	.3494	.0114	.1674	-	.2650	.3476	.2136

X_1 Selectivity Index (ranked)

X_2 Enrollment (ranked)

X_3 Coed Index (rank of percent males)

X_4 Control of school (religious affiliation or not)

X_5 Degree of religious affiliation (scale)

X_6 Religion requirements scale (courses and chapel attendance)

X_7 Percent living on campus (ranked)

X_8 Income of school (ranked)

X_9 Number of library books owned (ranked)

X_{10} Offering religion (full program, partial program, no program)

X_{11} Income Allocation Score*

X_{12} Library rank divided by enrollment rank (ranked)

X_{13} Income rank divided by enrollment rank (ranked)

*Library rank divided by income rank (ranked with 5 values)

correlations, it yields results indistinguishable from X4, the dichotomized variable (religiously affiliated, yes or no). Indeed, X5 is almost a dichotomy itself since 85.9% of schools fall into category 1, no affiliation with a denomination, or category 4, controlled by religious group. (The other values are 2 = traditional association with a religious group, 3 = affiliation in name only, 5 = trains religious personnel.) Therefore, we consider X5 and X4 interchangeable indicators of the same concept (religious affiliation or control). (For a related methodological discussion see Horwitz and Smith, 1955: 73-77.) In Table 15, it will be seen that X5 has almost the identical correlation with offering religion as X4. (The correlation of X4 with X5 is r = .96.)

As we have already observed, the relationship between control of school and offering religion does not vary greatly by region of the country (South versus non-South). Table 16 shows this relationship in non-dichotomized, tabular form. (Note the nonparametric measures of association at the bottom of Table 16.) A remarkable aspect of Table 16 is that it shows that departments of religion are concentrated in denominational institutions. 76.7 percent of all departments offering a full program (that is, a major) in religion are located in schools affiliated with religious groups. It may also be noted that only 10 percent of the public schools offer a major in religion. It may be additionally noted here that

Table 16 Offering Religion by Control of School (Percents)

Offering Religion	Control of School: Public	Private	Denominational	ROW TOTAL
No program	46.5*	43.4	1.1	
	67.5	30.6	1.9	
	(181)	(82)	(5)	(268)
Partial program	43.4	27.5	31.0	
	46.7	14.4	39.0	
	(169)	(52)	(141)	(362)
Full program	10.0	29.1	67.9	
	9.7	13.6	76.7	
	(39)	(55)	(309)	(403)
COLUMN TOTAL	(389)	(189)	(455)	
TOTAL				(1033)

*For each cell, percentages are arranged as follows:
Column percent
Row percent
(number)

Row percentages are based on row totals.
Column percentages are based on column totals.

(Missing observations = 267)
Tau B = .528
Gamma = .728
Somer's D = .517
(Ranked by degree of religion offered and distance from public support. For explanation of the latter, see p. 21.)
Contingency Coefficient (CC) = .525
Cramer's V = .436
$p<.001$ (based on X^2)

our data indicate that only 1 percent of public schools require a course in religion as part of the general education requirements. This amounts to three institutions of 264 for which we have data. We do not present this finding with much confidence since there may be as much as 2 or 3 percent error in the data (technical rather than sampling error due to mispunching of computer cards, miscoding of questionnaires and so forth). The true figure may be zero - no public schools require a course in religion. Apparently, public school administrators do not agree with Justice Clark (in the 1963 school prayer decision) that "one's education is not complete without a study of comparative religion ... and its relationship to the advancement of civilization." Or, perhaps, they would rather risk letting their students' education be incomplete than bring on controversy by requiring a course in religion - however objective that course might be or however legitimate the action may seem. Almost half of public schools (46.5%) avoid the question simply by having no courses in religion at all. At the same time, this action or inaction by public schools reinforces the association of the academic study of religion with denominational institutions and sectarian belief. In other words, the perception of academic religion as being associated with sectarian groups, a correct perception as the data show, engenders action that serves to reinforce the association and the perception. It seems to be

a self-fulfilling prophecy in the social system of American higher education (Merton, 1957: 421-436). (Unlike Merton's examples, however, we start with a perception that is true rather than false. But the reinforcing mechanism is the same.) The consequences of this self-fulfilling prophecy could be serious for the future of the discipline of religion, as we have already noted.

Although academic religion is closely associated with denominational control, there are other factors related to offering religion. We shall consider these briefly:

Table 15 shows that variable X6 is almost as closely associated with offering religion as control of school (X4 and X5). This relationship is largely explained by the relationship between denominational affiliation and making religion-related requirements of students. (See Table 7, p. 26 and related discussions above.) When we control for affiliation of school by treating public, private, and denominational schools separately, the relationship between these variables is much reduced. For public schools, X6 with X10, r = .169, tau c = .0997. (The measure of X10 for r here is not the same as the one used in the table. It is correlated with that measure at a high level (r = .84), and we consider it equivalent. But for comparison, note that the correlation of this measure of offering religion with X6 in the aggregate is r = .46 rather than .56. Exactly the same measures for the variables were used with the nonparametric correlations as are shown in

Table 16.) For private schools, the association is reduced to r = .31, tau c = .29. With private schools, there remains an association. We believe that this may be related to some imprecision in the identification of some of the institutions as "private, nonsectarian." (See p. 45 above.) We do not have a means of verifying this hypothesis at present, however. For denominational schools, the correlation is r = -.02, tau c = -.04. Table 17 shows that the introduction of X6 into a multiple R calculation produces little increment in the R^2 when X4 and X5 have already been introduced. (X4 produces no increase in the R^2 since X5 was introduced before it, and, as we have noted, the two indicators measure almost exactly the same thing.)

Table 17 shows that selectivity contributes about 5 % additional explained variation (R^2) when it is introduced. Disaggregating by control of school, we find that there is a tendency for selectivity to be mildly associated with offering religion among public schools, r = .26 ($p \leq .001$); to be more strongly associated with offering religion among private schools, r = .47($p \leq .001$); and to be not associated at all with offering religion among denominational schools, r = .097. The latter lack of association is not surprising considering the fact that nearly all denominational schools offer courses in religion (Table 16) regardless of any other factors. It is interesting to find offering religion associated

Table 17 Offering Religion (Multiple R), All Schools

Dependent Variable: X10, Offering Religion

Variables*	Multiple R	R Square[α]	R^2 Change[α]
X5	.5835#	.3405	——
X4	.5903	.3484	.0079
X1	.6323	.3998	.0514
X6	.6438	.4145	.0147
X9	.6642	.4412	.0267
X2	.6649	.4420	.0008

Based on an N of 1300

*Variable names are listed on p. 47.

#Does not equal the simple r listed in Table 15 due to a slight difference in the categories of some of the variables.

αThese figures may be read as percentages - multiply by 100.

with selectivity among private and public schools. As we have noted (p. 22ff. above), selectivity is not an unambiguous measure of school quality. It does seem to be conceptually related to institutional independence (see p. 33 and related discussions above). Institutions that are either insolated from outside pressures or whose constituencies are countervailing could be freer to emphasize academic qualifications in admissions (placing them higher on the selectivity index) and to risk possible controversy by offering religion than other institutions in the public and private categories. (Denominational schools, of course, are probably responding to their constituencies in offering religion studies. The type of religion offered in denominational schools may well be different from that offered in public and private schools. The author hopes to deal with this question in future research.) The data is not inconsistent with this interpretation. If this is a correct interpretation, some degree of institutional independence among private and public schools could foster the growth of religion as a discipline in non-religiously affiliated institutions of higher education.

Tables 15 and 17 indicate that the size of a school has little to do with offering religion in the aggregate. However, among public schools there is an association ($r = .39$, $p \leq .001$; tau c = .356. See note on measurement of X10, p. 51.) There is also an association among private schools ($r = .307$, $p \leq .001$; tau c = .301). No such association exists among denominational institutions ($r = .039$, $p \leq .001$), as might be anticipated.

The relationship between size and offering religion among public and private schools may result from the necessity of an institution being large enough, with a large enough income, to offer a subject that is not considered part of the basic core of subjects for a public or private school. (It appears to be considered basic for denominational colleges.) Colleges are consumers of academic commodities (cf. Elesh, 1973) and if rational (for discussions of rationality, see Weber, 1947: 115-118 and Levy, 1952, 242-248 - two of the many treatments of this subject), will acquire those commodities that are considered more basic before acquiring less basic items. Religion courses (teachers, departments, etc.) appear to be basic to religiously affiliated colleges since nearly all denominational colleges have them (Table 16). To private and public schools, however, religion courses are likely to be considered much less basic, or even undesirable, as we have noted. (For a brief discussion of marginal utility theory, on which this line of reasoning is based, see Keiser, 1965: 420ff.) The relationship between school income and size is quite high, $r = .815$, $p<.001$, in the aggregate and remains at approximately the same level for all three types of school control.

If our reasoning is correct, one would expect that the income variable (X8) would act in much the same manner as enrollment or size (X2). This is in fact the case:

There is no correlation between income and offering religion among denominational colleges ($r = .07$), while there is such a relationship among private and public schools (private: $r = .359$; public: $r = .397$; $p \leq .001$ for both).

A library is one of a college's most basic facilities. Therefore, following our reasoning based on marginal utility theory, a school would acquire library books before religion courses except in the case of denominational colleges where offering religion may be equally basic. If this is so, the size of a school's library should be related positively to offering religion, perhaps even more strongly than income or size. Table 17 shows that even in the aggregate and even in the presence of variables X5 and X4, size of library (X9) explains nearly 3 percent of the variation of offering religion (X10). While as expected there is no association between offering religion and library size for denominational schools ($r = .03$), for public schools the correlation is $r = .436$ and for private schools it is $r = .428$ ($p \leq .001$ for both).

There is an association shown in Table 15 between percent living on campus (X7) and offering religion. Diaggregated by control, this association holds up for private schools but not for denominational or public schools. The denominational finding is not unexpected, but that it remains associated among private schools is

somewhat puzzling. Two possibilities present themselves: First, since public schools are much less likely to be residential than private schools (nearly half of the public schools - 44.6% - have less than 41% of their students living on campus while only about a quarter of private schools - 26% - have so few students living on campus), providing dormitory space may be less basic to public schools than private schools. Therefore, public schools may not defer acquiring a department of religion until they have acquired dormitories, while private schools, conceiving themselves as more residential, may do so. Thus the more students living on campus, the more likely private schools are to offer religion. Second, and probably more likely, is that some "private, nonsectarian" labeled schools may really be closely associated with religious bodies. This is a misidentification to which we have already alluded. Despite some internal checks on respondents' answers and school descriptions as they appear in printed sources, we have no sure means of sorting these schools out. It may be that, since denominational schools are the most residential of all (85% have more than 40% of their students living on campus), it is possible that if we were able to control for the presence of "covert denominational schools" among the "private" group, the relationship between living on campus and offering religion might turn out to be spurious. Either, both, or neither of these possibilities may be correct, but we shall not pursue the matter here.

There is a weak association (Table 15) between percent males in the student body (X3) and offering religion (X10) which virtually disappears when affiliation of school is controlled. It is probable that this association is a result of male predominance in the religious professions (although this may be changing) since persons planning such a career often major in religion at a denominational college.

As a further check on the marginal utility explanation for offering religion in public and private schools, we constructed three new variables, X11, X12, and X13. X11 is library rank divided by income rank, reranked. X12 is library rank divided by enrollment rank, reranked. X13 is income rank divided by enrollment rank, reranked. (Since the original data is in ranks, these measures are somewhat crude.) X13 is conceived as a measure of a school's income relative to its size -- "real income." X12 is conceived as a measure of "real resources" in a school's possession as represented by library books. X11 is thought of as an indicator of income allocated to the basic resource, library volumes.

If we are correct that once a school has basic resources or facilities it may then acquire less basic items, one would expect that "real resources on hand" and "real income" would be more highly correlated with offering religion than unadjusted income or library size (X8 and X9).

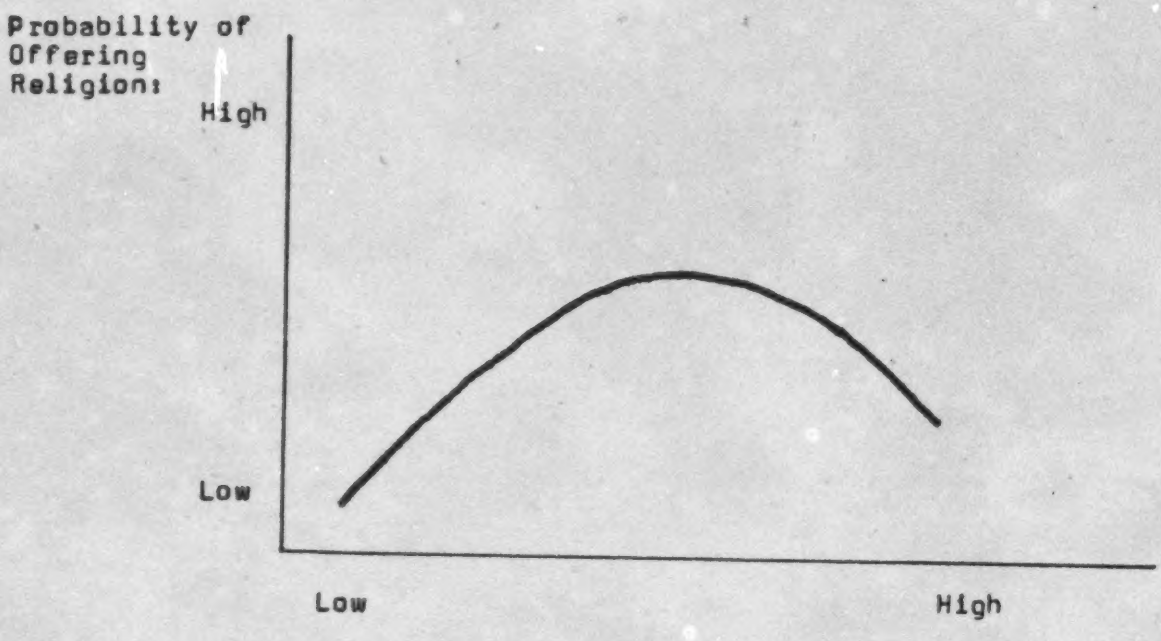
An inspection of Table 15 shows that this expectation is correct.

Analysis reveals that the income allocated to basic resources, as indicated by X11 - Income Allocation Score, has a curvilinear relationship with offering religion. (This fact explains the low linear correlation of X10 and X11 shown in Table 15.) That is, as the amount of income devoted to basic resources increases there is a greater chance the school will offer religion up to a point. If a school has to spent a very high proportion (values 4 & 5 on X11, IAS) on basic facilities (such as library volumes), it cannot afford to acquire "frills." This should be true of all schools since few items are more basic to a school than books, but it should be particularly true of private schools which are freer to offer religion when they have the means. Table 18 and Figure 2 show this relationship. Figure 2 illustrates the theoretical relationship. Table 18 shows that the lower part of the Income Allocation Score (IAS, X11) - values 1, 2, and 3 - is correlated positively with offering religion. But the upper part (4,5) of IAS is negatively correlated with offering religion, and the association is particularly strong for private schools. Even denominational schools follow the pattern here. Given these results, we can be reasonably certain that our analysis of the marginal utility of religion has some validity.

Table 18 Correlations (r) Between IAS (X11) and Offering Religion - Divided and Non-Divided Scale

	Income Allocation Score (IAS)		
	Non-divided Values: 1-5	Divided Values: 1-3	Divided Values: 4,5
All Schools:	.265	.265	-.150
Public Schools:	.058	.239	-.172
Private Schools:	.374	.450	-.457
Denominational Schools:	-.027	.289	-.244

Figure 2 Theoretical Relationship Between Income Devoted To Basic Academic Resources and Offering Religion



CONCLUSIONS

In very general terms, we may review our findings. In the summary of our introduction (p. 9 - 10), we asked three questions to which we can now propose answers: First, the perception of religion as an academic discipline being closely associated with religious groups is accurate. But this association is reinforced by the failure of public schools to foster religion studies in a nonsectarian environment. Private schools do this to a moderate degree, but only 10 percent of public schools offer majors in religion. Almost no public schools require a course in it. It is possible that a misunderstanding of governmental policy on and court decisions affecting religion as an academic discipline on the part of administrators or the general public may have played some part in retarding the expansion of this discipline to public schools.

Second, control of school is the major factor leading to offering religion. 98.9 percent of denominational schools offer religion courses while 56.6 percent of private and 46.5 percent public schools do so. Beyond this factor, a school that is public or private, particularly, must have sufficient means and independence to offer religion. It is possible that schools of higher quality are more likely to have such means and independence and to offer religion, but this is not established.

We have also noted that religiously affiliated schools tend to make religion-related requirements of their students. They tend to be small institutions in enrollment, but they are numerous enough to educate almost 29 percent of America's undergraduates. Denominational colleges tend to be residential. Many might be considered provincial and narrowly sectarian, but they increase the diversity of American higher education. Since denominational colleges have bases of support that are continuing (religious groups), they may be in a better position to resist becoming quasi-public institutions than private, nonsectarian schools. These schools are a valuable part of the American system of higher education, but the concentration of departments of religion in these institutions cannot be seen as a healthy sign for the discipline. To mature as a discipline, religion must separate itself in perception as well as in fact from the religious (that, the sectarian.) Its present close association with denominational colleges does not help accomplish this separation.

Third, and finally, is governmental policy affected in any way? We think so. It is possible that governmental (including judicial) actions have had a chilling effect on the growth of this academic discipline . If so, it is an unintended and unanticipated consequence as far as we can tell. Even if governmental actions are not responsible in any direct or indirect way for the concentration of

full programs in religion in non-public institutions, there still may be a role for governmental corrective action. Government at all levels would seem to have an interest in being sure that the education a student in a public school receives is as "complete" and "well-rounded" (to quote Justice Clark and Dr.Fister, p. 1) as possible. There has also been some effort on the part of governmental agencies to foster the development and propagation of knowledge for its own sake. If either of these goals is a legitimate goal of government, then it might be recommended that a governmental program whose purpose is to foster the development of the "study of ... religion ... objectively as part of a secular program of education" (Juctice Clark, p. 1), particularly in public institutions, be developed.

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